

# ABC 30 ACTION NEWS

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## Three years after receiving new well, Tulare County town still suffering from water shortage

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By: Brian Johnson

SEVILLE, Calif. (KFSN) –

Heather Kemper said her family goes 20 hours a day without water-- sometimes it's a trickle. They will wait until early morning to do laundry, flush the toilet, or shower and there's not enough water for the swamp coolers.

But Heather said they are not the only ones who suffer in Seville, in Tulare County.

"I mean this is an emergency situation, we're doing without water a lot, and it's not easy. We have elderly, disabled, fieldworker's, who are out there 12 hours a day, come home, and they can't shower."

Heather's husband, Christopher, is the superintendent of the town's only school-- where students and staff rely on bottled water and porta potty's, especially during the summer months.

"When the kids don't have access to the toilets just to flush it, it's hard."

In 2014, California's severe drought was hitting Seville hard. Their 100-year-old water system, long plagued by contamination issues, was failing, but within a matter of days the county secured funds for a new well.

"That kind of restored life back to its normalcy, at least for some period, but as the drought continued there was still the groundwater level decline. Of course the infrastructure is still old, and so we're at a point now where the current well, although new, is struggling to meet the current water demand of the community," said Maria Herrera, Self-Help Enterprises.

Through a state grant, bottled water is delivered to residents. Right now, county officials said they are waiting to hear back from the state about the possibility of installing another 15,000 gallon emergency tank.

The tank will help with Seville's water shortage, while it waits for an entirely new system. That project, expected to start this fall, will include a new well and connect Seville with its neighbor, Yettum.

"We're all in this together, we just need some help fixing the water situation," said Heather.

Heather Kemper has set up a PayPal to collect donations for Seville water relief.

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